

Michigan State Waterways Commission  
Minutes of October 3, 2008

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Michigan State Waterways Commission  
October 3, 2008

Department of Natural Resources  
Stevens T Mason Building  
530 W. Allegan Street  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

A regular meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was called to order by Chairperson Carol Oakley at 10:32 a.m. on Friday, October 3, 2008, at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Stevens T Mason Building, Lansing, Michigan. The following Commissioners were present:

Carol Oakley, Chairperson  
Denny Bailey  
Bob Brown  
Mike Bryanton  
Janet Mansfield

Commissioners Bryan Amann and Curtis Hertel Sr. were excused.

Parks and Recreation Section Chief Vicki Anthes and other Department of Natural Resources (Department) were present.

Public Appearances:

**Written Correspondence**

There was no written correspondence.

**Introduction**

Ms. Vicki Anthes introduced Ms. Jill Yehl. Ms. Yehl is a new employee and is joining the Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) as a Fund Developer. Chairperson Carol Oakley welcomed Ms. Yehl on behalf of the Commission.

**Appearances (Non-agenda Items)**

Former Senator John Pridnia thanked the Commission and staff for scheduling the August meeting in the Village of Port Austin (Village). He appreciated the Commission and staff taking the time to see the deficiencies in the Village's infrastructure first hand. Senator Pridnia provided an update as follows:

- At the urging of Congresswoman Candace Miller's, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) visited the Village last Monday to inspect the problems with the breakwall. It needs resurfacing, a new guardrail, updated lighting, and has sustained ice damage. A cost estimate will be available on Monday, October 6, 2008.
- The Village is waiting for a permit to open the breakwall to allow for water circulation under it.
- The Bird Creek Seawall is in its first phase of work and that is going well.
- The Village's fundraising for the \$1.7 million renovation of Veteran's Waterfront Park (adjacent to the Department's properties) is progressing and should be in hand by the end of December.

Chairperson Oakley thanked Senator Pridnia for the update.

Mr. Stephen Hume addressed the Commission regarding Gray Haven. He has been keeping the fence secure and the lawn cut. Chairperson Oakley informed Mr. Hume that the Commission and Department staff cannot comment because this is in hands of the Attorney General.

#### Minutes

#### **August 8, 2008**

MOTION: Commissioner Denny Bailey moved to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2008 Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and carried unanimously.

#### Old Business

#### **Project Status Report**

Mr. Paul Petersen provided an update on harbors as follows:

##### Harbors:

- The Cheboygan Lock and Dam (Cheboygan County) recently completed dam structural repairs, buttress repair, spillway and cribbing repair, and construction of a lamprey trap.
- The current phase of the Mackinaw City State Harbor (Cheboygan County) project includes a harbormaster building, pavilions, utilities and lighting, site work, and parking. Prep work is underway for the wind turbines. The completion date for this phase is July 1, 2009. Permits have been received from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth for the floating docks.
- Harbor Beach Marina (a Grant-in-Aid [GIA] facility in Huron County) is undergoing a dredge disposal and sediment abatement project.

- East Jordan Marina (a GIA facility in Charlevoix County) is undergoing a dredging project.

Mr. Jordan Byelich provided an update on boating access sites as follows:

Boating Access Sites (BAS):

- The project to construct the Forks BAS (in Cheboygan County) includes ramp construction, parking lot construction, maneuver area construction, grading and drainage, retaining wall, vault toilet, dredging, and skid piers.
- The project at Thumb Lake BAS (in Charlevoix County) included parking lot paving, vault toilet relocation, sidewalks, and site restoration. The project is completed and in use. This is the only access site on Thumb Lake
- The Mullett Lake Village BAS (Cheboygan County) project consisted of parking lot paving, vault toilet relocation, sidewalks, and site restoration. The project was completed one week ago and the BAS is now in use.
- The project at Kollen Park BAS (a GIA in Ottawa County) included a new facility access road construction, sidewalk construction, new maneuver area, ramp relocation, new parking lot, and dredging. The project is completed and used a trust fund grant).

Mr. Bill Boik provided information regarding a presentation he conducted recently for the Michigan Small Harbors Coalition. The following items were key components of the presentation.

- An analysis of the annual costs of dredging for the State of Michigan;
- An analysis of the annual cost of dredging for the ACOE.
- The estimated annual cost for the State of Michigan and local communities is \$3,952,406 with the ACOE spending \$9,274,716.
- Funding availability and the ACOE budget process (the earmark process is only for shallow draft harbors).
- Alternatives to dredging including: no dredging, dredging to higher depths, dredging to new depths.
- Sustained lower lake levels and projected lake levels.
- Hydrologic components for the Great Lakes.
- Adaptive measures: dredging deeper, extend infrastructure to deeper water, consider relocating, or possibly close.

Mr. Boik stated that the State of Michigan has leased a dredger and is piloting a program to do some dredging on our own. The equipment is now at Glenn Lake and will attempt to complete four locations during this dredging season.

Commissioner Bob Brown asked if Waterways money was available for dredging of the channel through the Les Cheneaux Islands. Mr. Boik referred him to an

application (due by April 1, 2009) available on the Web and he will send some additional information to Commissioner Brown.

- The Port Austin (Huron County) project is moving forward on engineering for the next phases. The project will include floating piers, utilities, and a building. Staff is still looking for construction dollars.
- With regard to the Crystal Lake (Benzie County) boat launch project, the Appeals Court reversed the Circuit Court decision and the Department has to comply with local zoning. The Department already complies for this project; however, this is an important issue for the Department and it will be taken to the Supreme Court.
- A feasibility study is underway for the Gray Haven facility.
- The Commissioners' Project Status Book will be updated and the old material will be recycled. Ten percent of the communities eligible for grants have returned the money because of difficult economic times.

### **Operations Status Report**

Mr. Harold Herta began his report with a discussion of the Central Reservation System (CRS).

- Transient boating slip nights were down 15 percent this year.
- Lake Huron and northern areas were hit harder than Lake Michigan areas.
- A few bright starts, such as New Buffalo.
- The Department is attempting to think outside the box to solve these issues. The traditional sources of revenue are not available anymore.
- The Department has just signed a contract with Government Solutions Group to fund and generate printed materials. This is a partnership with national outdoor recreation companies and ten states are involved.

Chairperson Oakley suggested involving local restaurants, hotels, casinos, and utilizing a kiosk to advertise at the facilities.

### **Standing Committee reports**

None

### **Strategic Planning Update**

Ms. Vicki Anthes provided an update on the strategic planning process. Committees and subgroups were charged with returning info to the core committee by the end of September. The draft Strategic Plan will be returned to advisory groups, such as the Waterways Commission. The final version should be ready at the beginning of winter with approvals in February. A better version of the draft will be available in about 30 days.

New Business

MOTION: Commissioner Mike Bryanton moved to approve all action items except Item C. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**City of St. Ignace Request**

Mr. Eugene Elmer, Marina Director for the City of St. Ignace addressed the Commission regarding difficulties being faced by the Marina. Gas prices have been very difficult for the marina and he is asking for additional seasonal slips. Chairperson Oakley stated the Commission understands his concerns and Department staff will work with the community to establish a mutually agreeable number prior to the December meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Jan Mansfield made a motion requesting that Department staff work with the City of St. Ignace to establish a mutually agreeable number of seasonal slips. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Information Items

**City of Alpena**

This item was tabled.

**City of South Haven**

Ms. Robin Abshire brought a request to the Commission regarding a capital improvement project the City of South Haven is beginning. The City faced with three capital improvement projects and is requesting assistance from the Department and Commission with phase three. Phase three will allow building a new clubhouse facility. The original one is 45 years old and is not accessible. It was built for 68 slips and the City now has 97. They are not on the reservation system and realize that would be a stipulation of a new grant.

Following Ms. Abshire's request, Mr. Bill Boik informed the Commission that \$13.6 million in project applications were received this year.

**Leland Township**

Mr. Chris Tellgar (Chairman of the Leland Harbor Commission) thanked Paul and Bill for coming to the Small Harbors Coalition Meeting this past Tuesday. The Leland Township facility was built in middle 1960s and no major renovations have occurred since then. Talk began in 2000 for this project, design work in 2002. The Township came to Commission in 2005 and intended to begin in 2006. There was a delay due to another State agency and the ACOE yanked permit. Prices have gone up a lot and the project budget is over \$1 million. The Township will add a second phase and is asking the Commission to provide

additional funding. The Finance Committee needs additional information and the Commission is not prepared to approve this request right now.

MOTION: Commissioner Denny Bailey moved to give staff the authority to move forward to work with the Township within the existing funding. Commissioner Mansfield Janet seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Other Business:

MOTION: Commissioner Bailey moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and unanimously approved. This meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

The next meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission is scheduled for Friday, December 12, 2008, in the Lansing area.